

Passamaquoddy Indian Township

Location and Land status:

The Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township is a federally recognized Indian tribe in Maine (population 1,158), with two distinct reservations, Indian Township and Pleasant Point. The joint land holdings total approximately 108,900 acres held in trust by the United States. The two reservations are 50 miles apart. The Tribe's land holdings are scattered widely across the State of Maine as a result of the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act.

Tribal Government:

In 1980, the Passamaquoddy received federal recognition as a Federally Recognized Indian Tribe. Each reservation has its own tribal government and jurisdiction. Each tribe has a biennially elected Tribal Council consisting of a governor, lieutenant governor, and six council members. The Joint Tribal Council, composed of the governing bodies of both reservations, manages joint tribal properties and assets. A tribal representative to the Maine State Legislature is chosen alternatively between the two reservations.

Economy:

Management of tribal services accounts for the employment of approximately 170 people. The tribe owns the third largest blueberry farm in the world on its land in Washington County. The Northeast Blueberry Corp., employs between five and 160 seasonal employees annually. The tribe also maintains 300 acres of alfalfa crop for cattle and horse feed on the reservation.

Tribal land holdings of about 135,000 forested acres provide harvestable timber. The tribe is also seeking to develop a casino style gaming and resort complex. Further, the Passamaquoddy are developing a cranberry plantation and processing facility as well as starting a value-added salmon products business. The tribe also operates a number of service related businesses, including a convenience store and restaurant.

PIT/EPA Partnerships:

The Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township manages its EPA grants through a performance partnership grant. The Tribe's Environmental Department is focusing on the following water related projects including Clean Water Act Section 106 water pollution control, and Section 104(b)(3) Water Quality and Wetlands, as well as the Safe Drinking Water Act projects. The overall goal of the tribe's Environmental Department is to protect tribal natural resources by improving and increasing the scientific data available on current conditions to better set priorities.

The Tribe is also identifying and addressing environmental issues which affect the Tribal environment and the health of Tribal members. The Tribe's environmental department continues to establish open and effective communications with federal, state and local environmental officials. The Tribe is building capacity through its EPA partnership efforts designed to respond to releases of hazardous materials which threaten the safety of tribal members and the health of the natural environment.

Future Environmental Plans:

The Tribal Environmental Department strives to provide tribal members with modern tools and knowledge to help better protect and conserve the natural resources. This means continued protection of traditional fishing, hunting, and gathering practices of the Tribe and to ensure that the traditional practices do not adversely affect the health of the tribal members (such as harmful consumption of mercury-tainted fish). The department will continue to test plants and animals to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the tribal members. The Tribe is working with EPA to determine what the risks are and how best to communicate that risk to tribal members.